

Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

Updated on 15/06/2007

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PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Dumbarton Castle
PROJECT CODE:	HSCO-90107-2010-01
PARISH:	Dumbarton
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Paul Fox
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Kirkdale Archaeology
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Watching brief
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PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Monitoring and recording was undertaken during the excavation of three trenches ahead of the installation of wooden posts related to the creation of a new interpretive trail. There were no finds or features of archaeological significance.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Historic Scotland
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS

**Historic Scotland
Properties in Care
Minor Archaeological Works 2010**

Dumbarton Castle: Interpretive Trail Posts Installation June 2010

**HS PIC Index Number: 90107
Project Code: HSCO-90107-2010-01**



**10th June 2010
Kirkdale Archaeology**

<u>Site</u>	Dumbarton Castle, near Glasgow, Clyde & Ayrshire
<u>N.G.R</u>	NS 398 744
<u>Project Description</u>	The excavation and recording of three trenches ahead of the installation of wooden posts related to the creation of a new Interpretive Trail.
<u>Project Code</u>	HSCO-90107-2010-01

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of its PIC call-off contract with Historic Scotland, Kirkdale Archaeology undertook a small scale excavation at Dumbarton Castle, near Glasgow. The work involved the digging of sockets for timber posts intended as stopping points on a new interpretative trail for children. Five posts were installed in total, three of which were done archaeologically - these being numbers 1, 3 and 4. Posts 2 and 5 had been installed previously (under archaeological supervision).

The locations for the posts were chosen in areas of known or suspected modern disturbance in order to limit the potential impact on any significant archaeological remains.

The excavation of each post hole was carried out by hand, and the work took place on 10th June 2010.

2.0 DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION

Trail Stop One (Trench 1) was located to the W of the Governor's House and overlooked King George's Battery. This was on the site of the former infirmary building, which had recently been demolished and the area subsequently levelled and covered with concrete slabs, each c.4cm thick (001).

The dimensions of Trench 1 were 0.6m x 0.61m x 0.4m (LxWxD). The single fill of this trench (002) consisted of a layer of black clayey silt mixed with assorted building debris commonly associated with construction. Approximately half of the material removed comprised chunks of stone which included sandstone and basalt. A selection of animal bone fragments were removed from this deposit along with modern white glaze pottery, earthenware and a modern clear glass shard. One piece of green glaze pottery, possibly medieval in date, was also recovered from within (002). The fill (002) was clearly material that had been used to level the ground

following the demolition of the infirmary. The finds that were recovered were likely to have been accidentally incorporated within this levelling material, and thus were of minor archaeological value.



Figure 1: Post-excitation shot of Trench 1.

Trail Stop Three (Trench 3) was located immediately beside the new handrail around the well, near the French Prison. It was situated between the S wall of the well and the grass verge opposite. The dimensions were 0.6m x 0.6m x 0.4m (LxWxD). The top c.0.07m (003) comprised an artificial layer of gravel. The lower deposit (004) was c.0.32m deep, and appeared to be an artificial make-up layer containing abundant modern pottery, glass shards and other general debris (red brick fragments, iron nails *etc.*). None of the artefacts recovered appeared to be earlier than the 18th Century in date. This area could have been the site of accommodation for soldiers garrisoned here in the 18th/19th Century, and so (004) was perhaps related to the

demolition of this accommodation and/or the levelling of the ground which took place once the buildings were gone.

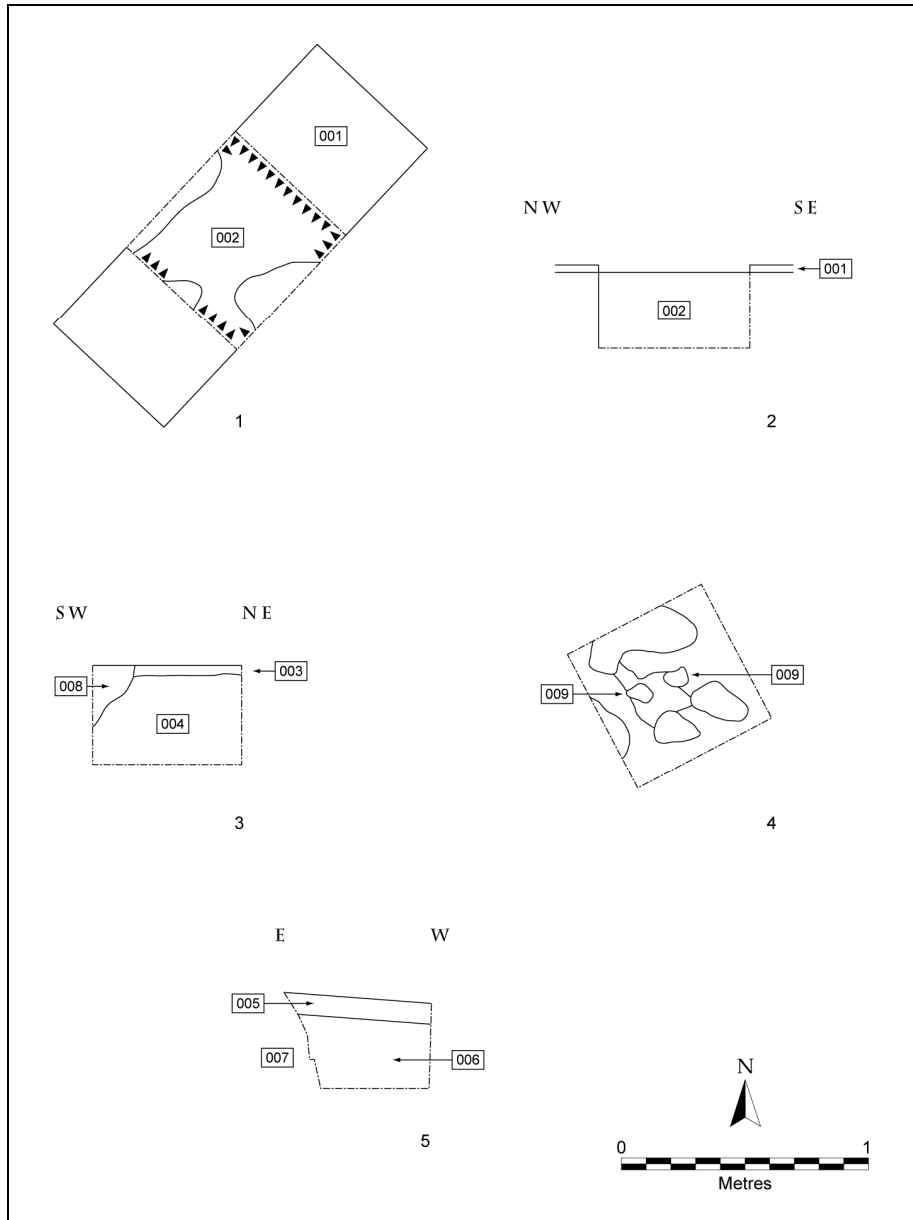


Figure 2: 1) Trench 1 plan; 2) SW-facing section in Trench 1; 3) SE-facing section in Trench 3; 4) Trench 3 plan; 5) N-facing section in Trench 4.

The SE-facing section of Trench 3 appeared to clip the edge of the previous excavation for the recent installation of the new handrail, although no cut for this trench was discernible. It also revealed a triangle of concrete (008) in the NW corner

of the trench related to the recent installation of footings for the handrail surrounding the well.

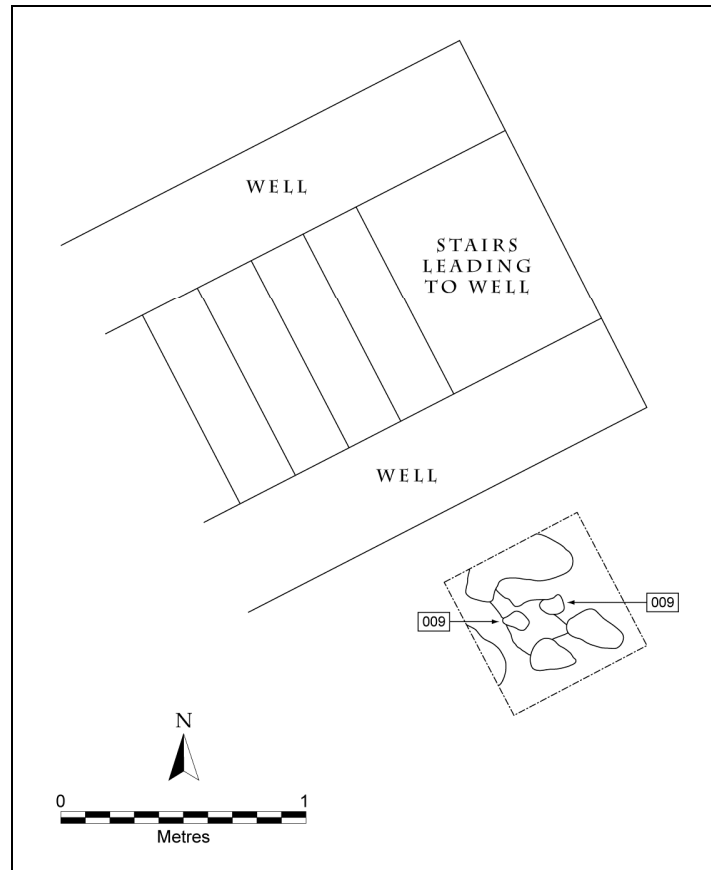


Figure 3: Location plan of Trench 3.

The base of the trench revealed a structure of red sandstone which appeared to be bonded together (009). From the previous excavation ahead of the installation of the handrail, this was known to be the top of the vaulted roof of the well below. It remained undisturbed, *in situ*, beneath the new post once it was installed.

Trail Stop Four (Trench 4) was located on the SE side of the path leading to the Duke of Argyll's Battery. The post was set into a concrete base close to (or on) the exposed natural bedrock. The trench dimensions were 0.6m x 0.6m (LxW). The depth of the trench varied, from c.0.28 m on the N, W and S sides of the trench, to directly onto the bedrock on the E side. The topsoil (005) was approximately c.0.08m deep and

directly beneath it was a black silty loam with frequent broken pieces of modern slate and red brick inclusions (006), which appeared to be the product of landscaping. It was c.0.28m deep (as excavated). Six pieces of modern white glazed pottery and a modern green glass shard were recovered from (006).

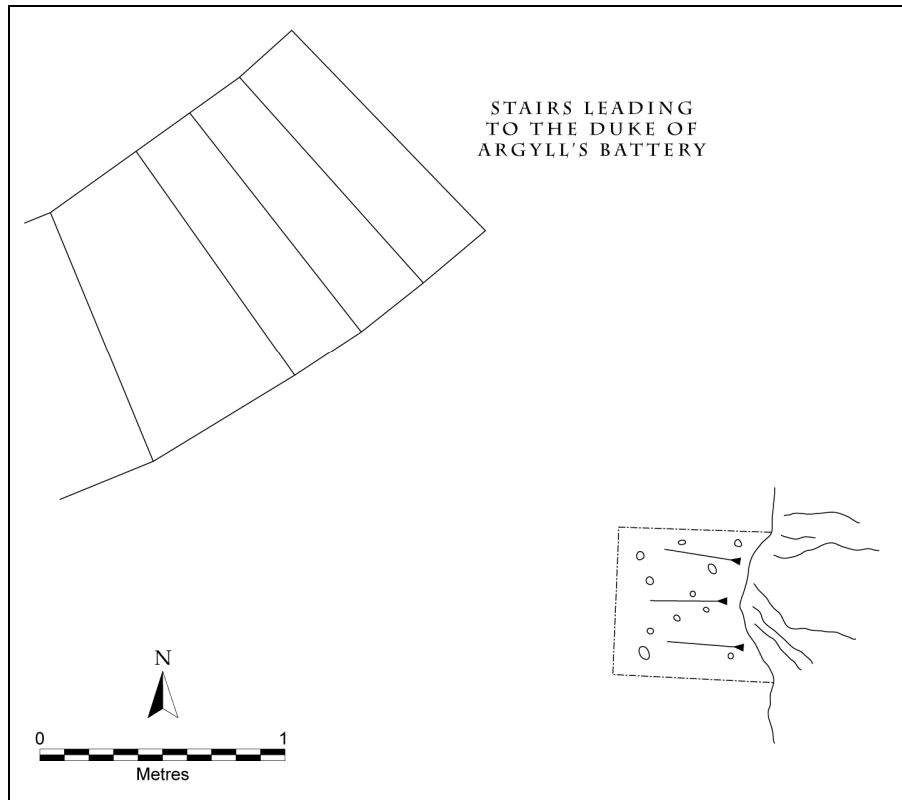


Figure 3: Location plan of Trench 4.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

The post locations were chosen to ensure minimal damage to any sensitive archaeological remains in the area, and so it came as little surprise that during the course of these works nothing of archaeological significance was located and no finds were recovered from contexts of great archaeological value.

However, the long history of occupation on the site as a whole indicates that the presence of sensitive archaeology deposits is highly likely, particularly at depths greater than those reached during the current works. Thus, any future ground-breaking work should be carried out under close archaeological supervision.

4.0 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS

No.	Description
001	Concrete slabs, c.0.04m thick. Upper fill of Trench 1.
002	Lower fill of Trench 1. Very dark brown/black clayey silt mixed with assorted debris (assorted fragments of sandstone, red brick, basalt and mortar). The deposit also contained fine yellow sand. A make-up layer.
003	Trample and gravel c.0.07m. The upper fill of Trench 3.
004	Lower fill of Trench 3. Very dark brown/black sandy silt mixed with frequent stones, occasional red brick fragments and abundant modern pottery and glass. A demolition and/or make-up layer.
005	Topsoil c.0.08m. The upper fill Trench 4.
006	Lower fill of Trench 4. Very dark brown/black silty loam. Frequent modern broken slate inclusions and some red brick fragments. Product of landscaping in the area.
007	Bedrock (basalt) visible in the E side of Trench 4.
008	Concrete visible in the SE section of Trench 3. Related to installation of new handrail footings around the nearby well.
009	Red sandstone and mortar structure in the base of Trench 3. Very top of the vaulted roof of the well below.

5.0 APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DRAWINGS

No.	Description	Scale
001	Sketch plan of Trench 1.	NTS
002	Sketch section of SW-facing section of Trench 1.	NTS
003	Sketch section of SE-facing section of Trench 3.	NTS
004	Sketch plan of Trench 3.	NTS
005	Location plan of Trench 3.	1:20
006	Location plan of Trench 4.	1:20
007	N-facing section of Trench 4.	1:10

6.0 APPENDIX 3: LIST OF SMALL FINDS

Context	Description
002	2 x Animal bone fragments.
002	4 x White glaze pottery sherds.
002	1 x Clear glass shard.
002	1 x Earthenware sherd (brown glaze).
002	1 x Green glaze pot sherd (medieval).

Context	Description
004	9 x Animal bone fragments.
004	1 x Animal tooth.
004	2 x Slag.
004	1 x Piece of iron.
004	1 x Iron nail.
004	1 x Modern nail.
004	1 x Unidentified worked piece of stone. Pentagonal in shape. Concave on one side, convex on the other.
004	26 x White glaze pottery sherds.
004	1 x Earthenware sherd (brown glaze).
004	1 x Red pottery sherd (unglazed).
004	3 x Stoneware sherds (one piece being from a bottle neck).
004	17 x Modern glass sherds (one from a square bottle/jar, one rim and lip of a glass bottle, one frosted glass piece (teardrop shape), two pieces from round glass bottles. One piece was the base of a glass bottle with the lettering 'REGISTE . . . TRADE . . BONHILL' with a trident shape).
006	1 x Red pottery sherd (unglazed).
006	1 x Green glass shard.
006	6 x White glaze pottery sherds (one was from base of plate).

7.0 APPENDIX 4: LIST OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

No.	Description	From	Date
1	Location shot Trail Stop One, Trench 1. Showing concrete slabs removed and Governor's House in background.	W	10/06/2010
2	Pre-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1 showing slabs removed.	W	10/06/2010
3	Pre-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1.	W	10/06/2010
4	Pre-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1.	N	10/06/2010
5	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1. Showing 002 in W-facing section.	W	10/06/2010
6	Post-excavation shot of Trench 1. Showing 002 in NW-facing section.	NW	10/06/2010
7	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1. Showing 002 in E-facing section.	NE	10/06/2010
8	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1. Showing 002 in S-facing section.	SE	10/06/2010
9	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1. Showing 002 in S-facing section.	SE	10/06/2010
10	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1.	V	10/06/2010
11	Post-excavation location shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1.	E	10/06/2010

No.	Description	From	Date
12	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop One, Trench 1.	V	10/06/2010
13	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing the well and French Prison.	SE	10/06/2010
14	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing the well in the background.	SE	10/06/2010
15	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing well to the left.	SW	10/06/2010
16	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing corner of the French Prison and the well.	S	10/06/2010
17	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing the well to the right.	NE	10/06/2010
18	Location shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing the well and corner of the French Prison.	SW	10/06/2010
19	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop three, Trench 3 showing the well to right.	NE	10/06/2010
20	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing red sandstone and mortar structure in the base of the trench.	V	10/06/2010
21	NE-facing section Trench 3 showing 003 and 004.	NE	10/06/2010
22	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3.	NE	10/06/2010
23	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing red sandstone and mortar structure in the base of the trench.	V	10/06/2010
24	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Three, Trench 3. Showing red sandstone and mortar structure in the base of the trench.	V	10/06/2010
25	NE- facing section in Trench 3.	NE	10/06/2010
26	NE- facing section in Trench 3.	NE	10/06/2010
27	SE-facing section in Trench 3 showing red sandstone and concrete in the section.	SE	10/06/2010
28	SE-facing section in Trench 3 showing red sandstone and concrete in the section.	SE	10/06/2010
29	SW-facing section Trench 3.	SW	10/06/2010
30	SW-facing section Trench 3.	SW	10/06/2010
31	Post-excavation location shot of Trail Stop Four, Trench 4.	S	10/06/2010
32	Post-excavation location shot of Trail Stop Four, Trench 4.	S	10/06/2010
33	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Four, Trench 4.	V	10/06/2010
34	Post-excavation shot of Trail Stop Four, Trench 4.	V	10/06/2010
35	NW-facing section in Trench 4 showing the bedrock, topsoil and fill.	NW	10/06/2010
36	SE- facing section in Trench 4 showing the bedrock, topsoil and fill.	SE	10/06/2010